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Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

The Rev. W. D. P. Bliss, in his new *rôle* of a smart Aleck, is an "amoosin little cuss."

Mr. Salter promises me his response to Mr. Yarros's review of his book for Liberty of May 2.

A New Orleans grand jury deplores the wide-spread belief that to be an office-holder is to be a thief and rascal, and complains that men of unimpeachable integrity decline to run for office because they fear the stigma of "politician" would attach to them and injure their reputation and business. But what is there to be done about it? The community has not invented the prevalent conception of politicians and office-holders; it has simply recognized facts, and given them due publicity. Does the grand jury wish to hide the truth, to blink at the facts, for the sake of inducing a few good men to serve? This is not the way to reform politics, and, as long as politics has not been reformed, good men will prefer to hold aloof from public affairs.

Fortune has been dealing unkindly with my friend Lloyd. A fire broke out lately in the premises of his publishers, Peter Paul & Co., of Buffalo, and it is probable that the entire edition of his "Wind-Harp Songs" was burned. This is not as severe a loss as that which John Henry Mackay suffered through the stealing of his manuscripts during his visit to Chicago, for money can replace the burned books, but not the stolen manuscripts. Still it must be very disheartening to Mr. Lloyd, coming so soon after his long effort to bring out his little book had been crowned with success. It is to be hoped that the disaster may be repaired. There are poems in "Wind-Harp Songs" which should not be suffered to be forgotten.

Defending "Americanism" and patriotism, Theodore Roosevelt, the man whom Chicago admires so intensely for doing in New York what she would never allow her authorities to attempt, made this peculiar comparison: "Some reformers may urge that in the ages distant patriotism, like the habit of monogamous marriage, will become a needless and obsolete virtue; but just at present the man who loves other countries as much as he does his own is quite as noxious a member of society as the man who loves other women as much as he loves his wife." If this means anything, it means that Roosevelt believes in variety as the ideal condition of sexual life. It is only "at present" that love of other countries and other men's wives is vicious; in the ages distant both patriotism and monogamic relations will disappear. What do the moralists and religionists who applaud Roosevelt's anti-Sunday saloon crusade think about this revelation? Can they trust a man who hints that he believes in variety for "ages distant"? The man who entertains such beliefs is more dangerous than a liquor-dealer who violates Sunday laws. Of course hundreds of moralists and religionists practise to-day what Roosevelt believes will be proper only in ages distant, but they take care to say nothing about it. Their theories are as austere and moral as possible. They will never weakly admit that strict monogamy will ever be superseded. Oh, no, monogamy is ideal and eternal.

The New York "Evening Post" believes that the only way to save the United States from political and economic disasters is to encourage "public discussion" of the great issues by the leading thinkers of the nation. Legislators, it says, are ignorant, demagogic, and irresponsible, and, if they are suffered to continue to poison the public mind, American civilization will be doomed. Whom has the "Evening Post" in mind when it refers to leading thinkers? Those who have convictions and are not afraid to avow them have not shown any disposition lately to hide their light under a bushel. Books and magazine articles continue to be published, and there has been no lull in the discussion of any social question. The trouble is that the politicians never read or learn anything, and that the same thing is almost as true of the voters. Politicians are doubtless cowardly, but they are also very ignorant, and, even if they never stopped talking, precious little good would result. The competent and educated are not in politics, and could never gain the ear of the crowd. McKinley, Reed, and Quay, to be sure, do not indulge in "public discussion" just now; but could their deliverances on any subject save the nation? The "Post's" suggestion is absurdly inept. The nation will not be saved by discussion, but by liberty, and, since it will not adopt it intelligently, it will have to blunder into it.

A Kansas City judge, in granting a divorce to "an injured husband," delivered himself of the following extraordinary sentiments: "The only fault I can find with you is that you have been too much inclined to leniency. If you had taken a shotgun and vindicated the honor of your home, you would stand better before this court and this community." The judge who told the husband that as a murderer he would stand better before him and the community is a venerable jurist and an ex-judge of the Missouri supreme court. Under the law of Missouri adultery is not punishable by death, yet the man elected and paid to administer the law lectures citizens for abiding by it, and incites them to murder! What respect he m[illegible] have for law and order! Some of the stupid newspapers, I see, call him a "judicial Anarchist." He is, of course, nothing of the sort. No Anarchist believes in legal marriage, and no home can be "dishonored" by sexual relations freely entered into by any man or woman. The judge is simply a barbarian, a fanatical Archist. He is also a hypocrite and a humbug. He is less civilized even than the law of his community—and *that* is not in a very high or advanced state.

Great was my surprise and delight to receive the other day from John Henry Mackay a volume of short stories from his pen, issuing from a prominent Berlin publishing house and printed from type set without "justification," after the typographical style employed by Liberty for the last two years. At the end of the volume is an acknowledgment of the pioneer step taken by Liberty in this matter. The page presents an admirable appearance.
Among my acquaintances is a gentleman who has spent a long life in the publishing business, and who imagines that the new typography is a grave offence to his eye. I laid Comrade Mackay's book before him with the remark: "The world moves, you see." He looked at the book for some moments, and then demanded an explanation of my remark. *His eye had not discovered that the book was set in the new manner.* This goes far to establish the truth of my contention that the æsthetic objections urged against the abolition of "justification" are purely fanciful, and prompted by a prejudice deep-rooted in habit. For their courage in practically assailing this prejudice Comrade Mackay and his publisher, S. Fischer, are to be warmly congratulated. With the exception of a small pamphlet issued in Cincinnati by the inventor of a new type-setting machine (one which does not "justify") as an illustration of its work, this, so far as I know, is the first specimen of book-work, in any language, in the new typographical style. Its title is "Der Kleine Finger und Anderes in Prosa," and it is the first of a series of volumes projected by its author under the general title of "Zwischen den Zielen." I shall be much obliged to Comrade Mackay, if he will send me any comments that the German press may make upon this innovation.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

"Voluntary State Socialism" Once More.

It is a great pity that our happy friend, Mr. Bliss, cannot devote a little more time to the discussion of the interesting points brought out in this controversy. If he had reflected more before making his decision, he must have perceived the unwisdom and inconsistency of his choice. Here we have been, as he says, too, too good to him; we have made admissions which have caused him to jump; we have filled him with delight by recognizing that his scheme is meant to be perfectly voluntary; and we have treated subjects which "involve a whole history of philosophy." Is it right for him to abandon the controversy at this point? Since he has found us so fair, reasonable, and generous, why does he despair of converting us to his views? What a historic victory it would be for his "voluntary Socialism" if he should succeed in annexing us and causing the disappearance of philosophical Anarchism as a distinct movement! His excuse that it is more important for him to fight our "practical allies," the trusts, is flimsy and inconsistent with his own optimistic philosophy. "Voluntary Socialism," which can be firmly built upon the foundations of usury, as he tells us, renders all assaults upon trusts foolish and Quixotic. Why fight them, when they can be entirely ignored and indirectly undermined by the new method, overlooked by all orthodox State Socialists and discovered by Mr. Bliss? The duty of Mr. Bliss and his disciples (if he has any, which I doubt) is perfectly clear. It is, simply, to introduce gradually his "voluntary Socialism" in the way outlined by him, without any regard to the vain and insignificant efforts of the blind reformers who still imagine that the abolition of monopoly or usury is an essential condition of the solution of the social problem. I am afraid Mr. Bliss does not yet realize the wonderful scope and effect of his marvellous discovery.

Having said so much by way of general introduction, let me now proceed to deal with Mr. Bliss's points *seriatim*.

In the first place, he is entirely mistaken with regard to the effects produced by his little letter in our camp. Mr. Bliss happened to make certain claims in relation to "municipalization," and this subject, collateral to the main issue of the merits of "voluntary Socialism," is a very important and interesting one. To discuss *it* is not to discuss Mr. Bliss at all, as he himself recognizes. State Socialists, municipal Socialists, Socialists-of-the-Chair, and many schools of unclassified reformers are now persistently urging municipalization and pointing to the work done in Great Britain as practical and conclusive proof of its practicability and advantageousness. If "voluntary Socialism" were submerged to-morrow, the municipalization movement would still remain as a conspicuous phenomenon requiring study. Liberty suspects that the facts, if intelligently presented, would fail to sustain the claims of the municipalizationists, and it has asked its friends to collect data, not for the purpose of refuting Mr. Bliss, but for the more important and general purpose of verifying the statements of such writers as Dr. Shaw, Professors Ely, Small, and Bemis, and Fabians Webb and Shaw. Mr. Bliss's extravagant and (as I have shown) baseless assertions with reference to taxation in the "reform" municipalities merely suggested the advisability of an inquiry into the facts of municipalization. Furthermore, one of my articles dealt with the simple question of *fact* whether taxation has had to be raised and enormous debt burdens incurred by the British municipalities to which he had referred us, and that article, which Mr. Bliss (wisely enough) prefers to pass over, discredited him both as reporter and generalizer.

It takes very little to make Mr. Bliss happy. He is happy to see Liberty interested in municipalization, happy to be proved a careless and untrustworthy writer on questions of fact, and happy to be told that, though he means well, his scheme is absurd and ridiculous. I envy Mr. Bliss and am ashamed of myself, for, if measured by his standard, I should be voted a most unreasonable man.

Mr. Bliss professes to think that I give my position away by admitting that he rejects every element of compulsion. Would he, then, have me decline to believe him on oath? I am bound to accept his solemn asseverations. He emphatically tells us that, when he says voluntaryism, he means it, and that he intends to reject compulsion of every kind and form. He tells us that he will have no compulsory taxation, no monopoly, no interference with private enterprise. The State is to borrow money in the open market, go into business in competition with private agencies, pay its expenses, interest, and instalments of the principal out of earnings, and in every way conduct itself like a private concern. Now, I know that Mr. Bliss is a sincere and well-intentioned reformer, and I am sure he means to fulfil his promises. I add, however, that his plan would not be "Socialism through the State," and that I regard it as impracticable to the point of absurdity and childishness. Yet he is happy, and asks the editor to print the words embodying my "admission" in big letters!

Now let us see how Mr. Bliss meets my point that his plan would not be "Socialism through the State." Passing by sneers and attempts at sarcasm (remembering that he laughs best who laughs last), what is the gist of his argument? This: that I beg the question and reason in a circle in defining the State as the embodiment of the invasive principle and arguing that the moment it ceases to use force it abolishes itself as a State and becomes a voluntary society; that all competent political philosophers reject, by implication, my definition of "the State," and use the term in the sense of political or social organization; that, while the State generally has used, and does use, force, it does not follow that it must always use it and that it cannot consistently undertake to do things on the voluntary plan; and that it is no more absurd for the State to refrain from the use of force than it is for the individual, who is admitted on all hands to have the right to use force under certain conditions.

Regarding the Anarchistic definition of "the State," Mr. Bliss flatly contradicts himself. First he asserts that all competent writers mean by "the State" social organization, ridiculing as peculiar and arbitrary my definition of the term; then he "admits" that "many writers —all writers, indeed—consider the State necessarily to have sovereignty, which we may define as the right to use force." Any man with a grain of logic will see that Mr. Bliss has given his case away by this "admission." If *all* writers insist that the State *necessarily* has sovereignty, then all writers tacitly accept the Anarchistic definition of the State as the embodiment of the invasive principle. They do not question the legitimacy of the invasion, but they recognize the *fact*. They all declare that a society which did not have the right to use force whenever it saw fit, no matter how well organized, would be a voluntary body, not a State. The right to use force is of the essence of the definition. Whether the State is necessary and ethically justifiable is, of course, *the* question at issue between Anarchists and Archists; but there is absolutely no difference of opinion with respect to the nature and scope of the institution called State.

If Mr. Bliss were a trifle more logical, he would perceive the irrelevant nature of his citations on this point. The unconscious trick consists in giving incomplete and general descriptions rather than precise and scientific *definitions*. *Of course* the State is claimed to be all that his authorities say of it; but what they say in the extracts quoted does not exhaust the description. Each of his authorities, if asked to define the State *strictly*, to distinguish between it and a voluntary association, would promptly refer to the element of sovereignty. It is not size or number which differentiates the State from voluntary bodies; it is *sovereignty*. I advise Mr. Bliss to read Mr. Salter's chapter on the idea and meaning of the State; he will there find his own authorities cited in proof of the correctness of the Anarchistic definition. I may reproduce for Mr. Bliss's benefit the following quotation made by Mr. Salter from Professor J. W. Burgess: "An organization may be conceived which would include every member of a given population, or every inhabitant of a given territory, and which might continue with great permanence, and yet it would not be the State. If, however, it possesses the sovereignty over the population, then it is the State. . . . The

State must have the power to compel the subject against his will; otherwise it is no State, it is only an Anarchic society."

This bears directly on the point under discussion, and ought to prove enlightening to Mr. Bliss. It disposes of his assertion that my definition is peculiar and question-begging, and shows that he is incapable of distinguishing between scientific definition and general description. Not a single authority, even among those cited by him, supports his absurd, peculiar, and arbitrary definition of the State as social organization merely; each emphasizes the element of sovereignty as the most essential part of the definition.

But, feebly and foolishly asks Mr. Bliss, must the State always continue to use force? His own authorities would answer: "Of course, as a *State*." When the State ceases to use force, it abolishes itself and is converted into an "Anarchic society" (as Professor Burgess says). Not satisfied with this, Mr. Bliss still more feebly and foolishly asks: "But must the State use force in every relation and undertaking which it assumes; might it not voluntarily refrain from using force in a particular relation, and agree to abide by the rules of free bodies or agencies?" His own authorities would again tell him that to the extent to which the State divests itself of its sovereignty and condescends to act on the plane of competitive societies, it figures, not as a State, but as a voluntary organization.

This is so clear and simple that further elaboration would be a waste of space and time. If Mr. Bliss still fails to see the point, I cannot, with all my "generosity," do anything for him. If, however, he does see it, he will also begin to understand the merit of my distinction between "Socialism through the State" and "Socialism through the same body that, in another aspect and capacity, acts as a State." It was not *doubt* which prompted me to draw this distinction, but the desire to be generous to Mr. Bliss, and to show him that I thoroughly understand his position. I knew what he meant by "voluntary Socialism," and I inferred what he meant by the State; and took pains to convince him that "voluntary Socialism through the State" is a contradiction in terms, an absurdity. He who asks the State to do something, great or small, without using force in any form, asks it to act in some other capacity than that of a State.

As for Mr. Bliss's remark about individual sovereignty not necessarily implying the use of force, it is extremely puerile. We *are* fond of insisting that the individual shall be sovereign, —but we mean, as Mr. Bliss well knows, sovereign *over himself*. We grant him the right to use force in defence of this self-sovereignty whenever his rights under equal freedom are infringed upon,—that is, whenever others attempt to exercise sovereignty over him and overstep the limits of equality of liberty. Sovereignty of the State, on the other hand, means sovereignty over the entire people,—the right to use force for any purpose it might deem necessary or desirable. The individual does not abolish himself by ceasing to use force against non-invasive fellow-men, since force with him is only a means of defence. The State rests on and lives by force, and, if it ceased to use force against non-invaders, it would cease to exist. It would have to begin by relinquishing compulsory taxation, which is suicide.

Now I think I have fully covered the first half of Mr. Bliss's reply. If he is still inclined to laugh and to view triumph from any distance at all, he is peculiar, and has far more "faith" than logic.

The second half of the reply is, if possible, even more disappointing to a generous opponent, who likes to have strong arguments to deal with. It is evasive, shuffling, trivial, and pointless from beginning to end, and one really has to apologize for considering it at all.

For instance, Mr. Bliss thinks it was inconsistent for me to devote "six columns" to an argument which I declared to be beneath serious discussion. Now, the trouble with men like Mr. Bliss is that they are so loose, incoherent, and careless that in one short paragraph they generally misstate a dozen matters of fact and make half-a-dozen errors of logic. You must either ignore them entirely, or else you must control your impatience and slowly dispose of the tangled tissue of assumptions and false claims. I had to deal with several matters of fact and of theory, and the point which I said could not be seriously treated occupied, not six columns, but one column, and was discussed, not for its own sake, but because Mr. Bliss, a discoverer, reformer, editor, and public guide, had advanced it with a flourish of trumpets and a display of fireworks. One often has to treat things seriously which really do not deserve serious treatment, and Mr. Bliss's "voluntary Socialism" is one of them. It is difficult to discuss it with patience, but there are reasons which render it necessary to master one's feelings and calmly consider nonsensical propositions.

Mr. Bliss—to give another illustration of irritating confusion and shuffling—says I have unnecessarily collected facts to show that English municipalities use invasion. But why did I collect these facts? That Mr. Bliss did not claim that those municipalities were Socialistic or voluntary I fully recognized and freely stated. But he did claim that the "municipalization" of industries of a certain kind did not entail additional taxation, and *this* claim I have overthrown by the facts collected. Mr. Bliss has probably even forgotten that he has made this claim; but the "record" is against him. He now says that he never denied that tax rates had to be raised to carry out the municipal reforms; but this is exactly what he did deny, and it was to expose the recklessness of his assertion that I collected the facts he refers to.

But the chief question is whether "voluntary Socialism by the body which, in another capacity, acts as a State" is possible. Mr. Bliss asserts that it is, and again seeks to prove his case by the experiments of English and other municipalities. Admitting, he says, that taxes have had to be increased in most, if not all, cases, yet since, according to a witness produced by me, "most of these [municipal] undertakings are already remunerative," it follows that "compulsory Socialism is by no means necessary to Socialism." If all municipalizers are as hasty and superficial as Mr. Bliss, the great victories of municipalization can be easily accounted for, and no investigation is necessary. Let us assume that the undertakings are now remunerative, as alleged, although a number of important questions occur to the mind in this connection upon which no light is thrown. Does that prove that the State can go into business without compulsory taxation? Will Mr. Bliss kindly tell us, in the first place, where the municipalities obtained the capital to start the industries and establish the plants? Will he tell us, in the second place, how a commercial test can be applied to an establishment which is independent of competition? When salaries and prices are arbitrarily fixed, and there is absolutely no check upon the management in an industrial sense, what does "success" mean? Do the municipalities allow competition on the part of private companies? Has it been ascertained that the prices charged are not higher than private concerns would exact? Before Mr. Bliss can make any claims, he has to answer these questions. (1) How were the funds originally raised? (2) By *taxation*, increased or otherwise? Then there is nothing further to discuss, for there is compulsion at the start. (3) By the issue of bonds? Then have the prinpal and interest been paid entirely out of the proceeds? If not, then compulsory taxation has played an important part again. (4) Is perfect freedom of competition allowed, or has the municipality a monopoly in the products manufactured for the local market? The answers to these questions, I venture to say, will show that there is little that is "voluntary" about the "municipal Socialism" of Mr. Bliss's cities.

Let us, however, dismiss the municipalities, and consider Mr. Bliss's plan in the abstract. Determined to reject compulsion, he would have the State raise money by issuing bonds. With the money thus raised the State would purchase the existing railroads or build new lines. Since, he says, railroads running for profit cannot compete with railroads run at cost, the State would speedily become master of the field and control the entire industry.

This is positively childish, and only a man wholly ignorant of industrial conditions, methods, and processes could utter such nonsense. Bonds, Mr. Bliss, have to be sold in the market, and capitalists will not purchase them unless they get a fair rate of interest and are sure of the ability of the borrower to pay the principal at the specified time. The first question is, can the government obtain the money to buy or build the railroads of the country? Any business man will tell the innocent Mr. Bliss that it cannot; that there is not enough idle capital in the market to supply such demand. The second question is, assuming that the government obtained the money, how could it run the lines "at cost"? It would have to pay the interest on the debt, and save enough to gradually call in the bonds and extinguish the debt. Could it do this and still pay employees higher wages, or give the public lower rates, than the private railroads? If not, where is the "Socialism"? Who would benefit from the change?

But the most fatal objection has yet to be stated. Let us concede everything to Mr. Bliss, and rest our case on this single, but crushing, point,—namely, that the moment the State ceases to employ compulsion and announces that, within certain limits, it is to be a

voluntary, competitive organization, its ability to borrow is completely, absolutely gone. Why do capitalists invest in government bonds? Because the power of government to tax is practically unlimited. They know that the government has nothing and earns nothing, but they know that the country's wealth is constantly increasing, and that the government will continue to levy taxes and raise all the revenue it needs. But suppose the government should accept Mr. Bliss's plan and have the secretary of the treasury make some such announcement to the public as this: "We, your sovereign government, have determined to nationalize the country's industries on the voluntary plan. While we shall continue to use force for the purposes in which we are now engaged, we hereby solemnly state that the new undertakings we are entering upon are not in any way to rest on force. We want to buy or build railroad lines; we need money for the purpose? Will you buy our bonds, which we promise to redeem, not from our general, compulsorily-raised fund, but from the profits of our new business? Knowing our wonderful business ability, you can have no doubt that our railroads will be a source of extraordinary profit to us, and we promise to pay you everything, principal and interest, out of our net profits. Come, submit your bids." Does Mr. Bliss imagine that such a proclamation would yield a red cent? Jeers, laughter, cat-calls, and hooting would be the only response. What! trust to the ability of the government to *earn* money, and have no security at all, not even the "faith and credit of the nation"? One or two lunatics might come forward, but the capitalists, great and small, would know better. Mr. Bliss would then find out what happens when the State acts in some other capacity than its ordinary and natural one, when it divests itself of sovereignty and tries to borrow money without the security which is afforded by its exercise of the taxing power.

I repeat: I am willing to admit everything claimed by Mr. Bliss, including the preposterous statement that private industry cannot compete with government industry (for which there is not a shred of evidence), and rest my case against "voluntary Socialism through the State" on this single consideration. Let Mr. Bliss stop fighting windmills—I mean, trusts—long enough to meet this objection.

A word or two concerning the concluding paragraphs of Mr. Bliss's letter. Because "progress comes by evolution through existing institutions," he assumes that it must come through the State acting as a voluntary association! He forgets that there are other agencies and institutions in existence, and that we have at least as much reason for *our* assertion that progress must come through these free agencies, as he has for his assertion. Freedom exists to some extent to-day, and we claim that more freedom is as essential to further progress in industry as it is to further progress in thought and social relations other than industrial. We are not calling for a miracle, but relying on a substantial, tried, known, and solid reality.

The credit for the caption deemed so brilliant by Mr. Bliss is mine. It is I, and not my friend Tucker, who was so generous as to describe Mr. Bliss's plan as a Socialist paradise based upon usury, and to me his warm thanks are due,—that is, if thanks are due at all. But, really, I don't see what Mr. Bliss is so grateful for. He evidently has failed to grasp the meaning of the word "based." Has he heard of the fate of the house built upon the sand? A worse fate is in store for anything based upon usury. Usury and Socialism are incompatible; it is the object of all Socialists to *destroy* usury, not to base anything upon it. It is because the present system is based upon it that it has been condemned as impossible. He who proposes to base Socialism on usury cannot possibly comprehend either. Mr. Bliss uses terms without reference to their meaning. Would he rejoice to be told that his religion is based upon ignorance, his morality upon vice, his love upon prostitution? He would contemptuously declare such dicta to be self-contradictory, empty, and absurd. Well, if his scheme is aptly described as a Socialist paradise based upon usury, then his scheme is absurd and impossible.

A suggestion to Mr. Bliss—to be generous to the end. As he claims to be a Fabian, let him submit his great discovery to such Fabian economists as G. Bernard Shaw and Sydney Webb. He may find it difficult to understand Anarchistic reasoning; he will find it easy to believe the statements (which, I fear, are likely to be rather emphatic and charged with more impatience than my arguments) of his own comrades. So anxious am I to aid Mr. Bliss that I earnestly urge him to "arbitrate"—agreeing to the selection of any prominent Fabian economist as the arbitrator. I am sure he would thank me for having been cruel only to be kind.

V. Y.

A municipal reform movement is on foot in Chicago, and a lively mass meeting has lately been held to urge citizens to elect honest men to the city council. Nearly every speaker frankly admitted that municipal government in most great cities was an organized system of blackmail and robbery, but no one had any remedy to offer, except C. S. Darrow, who will probably be an Anarchist some day. He ridiculed the meeting, and said it might next be found necessary to urge citizens to respect the multiplication table. It is impossible to have honest men in municipal governments, because even those who are honest at the start generally become corrupt and venal in office. The only thing to do, said Mr. Darrow, is to deprive officials of the opportunity to do mischief. Do not allow them to grant franchises or meddle with business, and it will be no one's interest to corrupt them. All of which is very true, and I am glad Mr. Darrow, who has plenty of courage, by the way, expressed these ideas at the meeting. But will he tell us how he can carry out his own programme without abolishing government and compulsory taxation altogether?

It would be interesting to know what the editor of the "Engineering Magazine" now thinks of the consistency of its financial guide and authority, the "Evening Post." Mr. Dunlap, in a leading article on finance, talks about the necessity of retiring the greenbacks and stopping the working of the "endless chain." He apparently is unaware of the fact that the "Post" no longer adheres to the endless chain theory. True, for months, if not years, it had insisted that the greenbacks were the only obstacle to confidence and prosperity, and that the endless chain would continue to operate as long as they were suffered to remain as a part of our monetary system. But Mr. Dunlap's authority has seen new light. It told us some weeks ago that there was too much currency in circulation, and that, as soon as a certain amount should be locked up in the treasury, the chain would cease to operate. The "Post's" war on the greenbacks is over, therefore, and Mr. Dunlap and other disciples are left in the lurch. The trouble, it appears, is that there is too much currency in circulation. Still, it would not be safe for the "Engineering Magazine" to modify its platform; another week, and the authors of the greatest work on finance will doubtless turn round again.

The Boston "Herald" notes with satisfaction that "a wave of depression has passed over the rank and file of Anarchists and Socialists." If it means that the noisy and revolutionary agitators have subsided, it is doubtless correct. But the intellectual propaganda of radicalism is as active as ever, and it is from this movement that the "brotherhood of thieves" has most to fear. Is it possible that the *bourgeois* society is craving for excitement and misses the bomb-thrower? The "Herald" thinks that "honest labor has taken the place of loud-mouthed vaporing," but in this it is unfortunately mistaken. If that were the case, the "Herald" writer would be employed at some useful trade, and have no opportunity of writing himself down a fool in attempting to discuss social movements.

Professor Parsons, who is agitating for governmental ownership of railways, finds considerable difficulty in devising methods of acquiring the existing roads. He makes several suggestions, but the one he lays special stress on is that new currency should be issued to buy them. Is it possible that he hasn't heard of Mr. Bliss's great discovery? I urge Mr. Bliss to write to Professor Parsons at once and convert him to "voluntary Socialism through the State." Every plan of the reactionary professor is bottomed on compulsion, and it is Mr. Bliss's duty to stop fighting trusts and open the eyes of the compulsionists to the new, *fin-de-siècle* method.

I am informed that, when the Rev. W. D. P. Bliss was at college, political economy was the one study in which he failed to get through at his examinations. "Apparently," added my informant, "he is not through yet."

Meredith and His Style.

To the Editor of Liberty:

I think you are quite right when you state that the only man who can adequately criticise Mr. Meredith is Mr. Meredith himself. Perhaps Mr. Meredith could also translate himself into English. The result would reflect little credit on him. All his alleged "power," like that of Browning's later verse, comes from its "queerness" and affectation. There are always people in the world who think things great or remarkable when they are grotesque or fantastic. But I often find that these same people belie themselves by admiring, very frankly and sensibly, the honest art of the world, whether it be literature, painting, or sculpture. I think even such an attitudinizer as Carlyle would confess to the simple and sincere sublimity of Michelangelo's "David," which I watched here for a

good while, not long ago, in the *Accademia.* The George Merediths, the Carlyles, the Walt Whitmans (believe me or not, as you choose) are the mountebanks of the world. They are incapable of straightforward, unaffected labor, and they surely mask feebleness behind eccentricity. Respectfully yours,

EDGAR FAWCETT.

FLORENCE, ITALY, MARCH 10, 1896.

P. S.—Your journal tells me that it is "not the daughter, but the mother, of order." That is an effective and admirable announcement. Now be the mother of order in *letters.* Why not? Disdain *posing* and masquerading. *Maternally* rebuke all affectations, all petty egotisms in style and thought, all *gush,* such as Carlyle's, etc. E. F.

After putting the above letter in type, I submitted a proof, for comment, to Mr. Herman Kuehn, the ardor of whose admiration for Meredith is equalled by the intensity of his hatred of all pose and affectation. Instead of answering Mr. Fawcett by an extended argument on his own behalf, he has preferred to present the defence of Meredithian methods that is to be found in Meredith's works, as may be seen below.

To the Editor of Liberty:

Edgar Fawcett lacks, apparently, a capacity for discernment. He does not grasp the idea that Liberty's motto does not commit your journal to maternity. Neither does he perceive that the "mass of pompous affectation" in Mr. Meredith's "Amazing Marriage" is a playful presentation of Dame Gossip's Chronicles of a period whose annals are best recounted in the stilted phrases of "pompous affectation."

There is no need of a translation of Meredith into commonplace. We have enough commonplace as it is, and some of Meredith's critics have contributed voluminously to the evanescent mass of it.

I prefer to give Mr. Meredith himself the remainder of the space allotted to me. HERMAN KUEHN.

"Light literature is the garden and the orchard, the fountain, the rainbow, the far-view; the view within us as well as without. Our blood runs through it, our history in the quick. The Philistine detests it, because he has no view, out or in. The dry confess they are cut off from the living tree, peeled and sapless, when they condemn it. The vulgar demand to have their pleasure in their own likeness—and let them swamp their troughs! they shall not degrade the fame of noble fiction. We are the choice public, which will have good writing for light reading. . . . I have learnt as much from light reading as from heavy—as much, that is, from the pictures of our human blood in motion as from the clever assortment of our forefatherly heaps of bones. Shun those who cry out against fiction, and have no taste for elegant writing. For to have no sympathy with the playful mind is not to have a mind: it is a test.—*Tragic Comedians.*

"Then, ah! then, moreover, will the novelist's Art, now neither blushless infant nor executive man, have attained its majority. We can then be veraciously historical, honestly transcriptive. Rose-pink and dirty drab will alike have passed away. Philosophy is the foe of both, and their silly cancelling contest, perpetually renewed in a shuffle of extremes, as it always is where a phantasm falseness reigns, will no longer baffle the contemplation of natural flesh, smother no longer the soul issuing out of our incessant strife. Philosophy bids us to see that we are not so pretty as rose-pink, not so repulsive as dirty drab; and that, instead of everlastingly shifting those barren aspects, the sight of ourselves is wholesome, bearable, fructifying, finally a delight. Do but perceive that we are coming to philosophy, the stride toward it will be a giant's—a century a day. And imagine the celestial refreshment of having a pure decency in the place of sham; real flesh; a soul born active, wind-beaten, but ascending. Honorable will fiction then appear; honorable, a fount of life, an aid to life, quick with our blood. Why, when you behold it, you love it—and you will not encourage it?—or only when presented by dead hands? Worse than that alternative dirty drab, your recurring rose-pink is rebuked by hideous revelations of filthy foul; for nature will force her way, and, if you try to stifle her by drowning, she comes up, not the fairest parts of her uppermost! Peruse your Realists—really your castigators for not having yet embraced philosophy."—*Diana of the Crossways.*

"Brainstuff is not lean stuff; the brainstuff of fiction is internal history, and to suppose it dull is the profoundest of error. . . . Dozens of writers will be in at yonder yawning breach, if only perusers will rally, to the philosophic standard. They are sick of the woodeny puppetry they dispense, as on a race-course, to the roaring frivolous. Well, if not dozens, half-dozens; gallant pens are alive; one can speak of them in the plural. I venture to say they would be satisfied with a dozen for audience, for a commencement. . . . A great modern writer, of clearest eye and head, now departed, capable in activity of presenting thoughtful women, thinking men, groaned over his puppetry—that he dared not animate them, flesh though they were, with the fires of positive brainstuff. He could have done it, and he is of the departed! Had he dared, he would (for he was Titan enough) have raised the Art in dignity on a level with History, to an interest surpassing the narrative of public deeds as vividly as man's heart and brain in their union excel his plain lines of action to eruption."—*Diana of the Crossways.*

"Your condemnation may be correct in itself; but you say, 'He coins words;' and he certainly forces the phrases here and there, I must admit. The point to be considered here is whether fiction demands a perfectly smooth surface. Undoubtedly a scientific work does, and a philosophical treatise should. When we ask for facts simply, we feel the intrusion of a style. Of fiction it is a part. In the one case the classical robe, in the other any mediæval phantasy of clothing."—*Sandra Belloni.*

"We are still fighting against the Puritan element, in literature as elsewhere. . . . Our language is not rich in subtleties for prose. A writer who is not servile and has insight must coin from his own mint. In poetry we are rich enough; but in prose we owe everything to the license our poets have taken in the teeth of critics.—*Sandra Belloni.*

"So it has been with our greatest, so it must be with the rest of them, or we shall have a Transatlantic literature. By no means desirable, I think. Yet, see: when a piece of Transatlantic slang happens to be tellingly true—something coined from absolute experience: from a fight with the elements—we cannot resist it: it invades us. In the same way poetic rashness of the right quality enriches the language."—*Sandra Belloni.*

"Such is the construction of my story, however, that to deny the Philosopher the privilege he stipulated for when with his assistance I conceived it would render our performance unintelligible to that acute and honorable minority which consents to be thwacked with aphorisms and sentences and a fantastic delivery of the verities. While my Play goes on, I must permit him to come forward occasionally. We are indeed in a sort of partnership, and it is useless for me to tell him that he is not popular and destroys my chance.—*Sandra Belloni.*

The Nature of Pity.

[Translated from the German of Nietzsche by George Schumm.]

"NO LONGER TO THINK OF ONE'S SELF."—Let us thoroughly ponder the question: why does one jump to the assistance of a man who falls into the water, even when we are not friendly to him? "From pity," says thoughtlessness; "under such circumstances we think only of the other." Why do we experience pain and discomfort at the sight of one who spits blood, even when we are angry with and hostile to him? "From pity," says the same thoughtlessness; "under such circumstances one no longer thinks of one's self." The truth is: in pity—I mean in that which is generally, but erroneously, called pity—we do not indeed any longer consciously think of ourselves, but *very strongly unconsciously,* as when, in the slipping of a foot, we make, unconsciously now, the most expedient counter-movements, and thereby clearly call into play all our faculties. The accident which befalls another offends us; he would convict us of helplessness, perhaps cowardice, if we did not come to his assistance. Or it carries with it a diminution of the respect in which we are held by others, or of our self-respect. Or there is in the accident and suffering of another a hint of the danger to ourselves; and, as the signs of human danger and frailty in general, let alone other considerations, they can affect us painfully. This sort of pain and offence we repel and retaliate by a manifestation of pity. In it there may lie a fine self defence, or also revenge. That at bottom we strongly think of ourselves may be gathered from the decision at which we arrive in all those cases in which we *can* avoid the spectacle of the suffering, the needy, the lamenting: we decide *not* to do it when we can approach them as the more powerful, the helpful, when we are certain of applause, when we wish to experience the reverse of happiness, or also when we hope to escape *ennui* through their aspect. It is misleading to call the suffering which we experience under such conditions, and which may be of a varied character, pity or fellow-suffering, for it is under all circumstances a suffering from which the sufferer before us is *free:* it is our own, as his suffering is his own. But it is *only our own suffering* that we set aside when we manifest pity. However, we never do anything of this nature from one motive; as certainly as we wish thereby to free ourselves from some pain, just as certainly do we at the same time *yield to an impulse of pleasure,*—pleasure proceeds from looking on the reverse of our condition, from the thought that we are able to help if we only want to, from the promise of praise and gratitude in case we help, from the activity of helping in so far as the act succeeds and as something gradually succeeding in itself gives delight, but especially from the sensation that our conduct puts a stop to a revolting injustice (even to give vent to one's feelings of revolt is refreshing). All this, all this, and more subtle things still, is "pity"; how clumsily language with its one word seizes upon such a polyphonic thing! That, on the other hand, pity is *akin* to the suffering at the sight of which it arises, or that it has an especially fine penetrating understanding for it,—both these statements are contradicted by *experience,* and whoso has glorified it in these regards has *lacked* in this domain of morality the sufficient experience. This is my doubt regarding all the incredible things which Schopenhauer predicates of pity,—he who would thereby persuade us to accept his great discovery that pity (precisely the pity so inadequately observed, so poorly described, by him) is the source of all past and future moral actions, and just because of the attributes which he has first *falsely* ascribed to it. What finally distinguishes the people without pity from the pitiful? Above all—to speak here also roughly—they have not the sensitive fancy of fear, the fine faculty for scenting danger; nor is their vanity so quickly offended, if something happens which they might prevent (a wise pride enjoins them from interfering uselessly in the affairs of others; yes, they prefer on their own motion that each should help himself and play his own cards). Besides, they are more accustomed to the bearing of pain than the pitiful; nor does it appear so wrong to them that others suffer, since they have themselves suffered. Finally, the condition of soft-heartedness is painful to them, as is to the pitiful the condition of stoical equanimity: they cover it with disparaging words, and hold that their manliness and cool valor are thereby in danger; they hide the tear before others, and wipe it away, vexed with themselves. They are *another* kind of egoists than the pitiful; but to call them in the distinguished sense *bad,* and the pitiful *good,* is nothing but a moral fashion which has its day: as also the opposite fashion has its day, and a long day!
—*Morgenröthe.*

A man who says: "This pleases me; I will take it for my own, and protect and defend it against all comers"; a man who can champion a cause, carry out his resolutions, prove faithful to an idea, hold the love of a woman, punish and overthrow a wrongdoer; a man with wrath and a sword, and whom the weak, the suffering, the sorrow-laden, also the dumb brutes, gladly own and submit to; in short, a man who is by nature a *master,*—when such a man shows pity, well! *this* pity has worth! But of what worth is the pity of those who suffer? Or of those who even preach pity?
—*Jenseits von Gut und Böse.*

A Notable Book.

[Book Reviews.]

An important work, "The Coming Individualism," by A. Egmont Hake and Otto Wesslau, is published by Macmillan & Co. In it an attempt is made to combat the theories of collectivism. It carries the war boldly into the enemy's camp, and seeks to demonstrate that collectivism means retrogression, leading to depression, poverty, and social chaos; that the anomalies of our civilization spring from collectivist features; and that personal liberty is the indispensable condition of happiness and prosperity, and the immediate goal of all progress. This volume also deals exhaustively with economic and social mistakes in the past, to which the authors attribute the distrust in liberty which is characteristic of our times, and aims to prove that, when economic liberty has been accorded to the masses, all excuses for collectivism will have disappeared.

An Eye to the Future.

[Puck.]

Assemblyman Wayback. This bill is sure to be unpopular. Do you think it should be passed?

Assemblyman Binthere. By all means! We can repeal it next session by way of Reform.

With Nature.

To his pagoda walks the Hindoo old
To bow the head before his images;
The swarthy Arab makes a pilgrimage
To kneel in prayer upon his prophet's tomb;
I rather seek the old umbrageous wood,
The pathless cliff, the tranquil sunny dale,
And all alone in pleasant solitude
Confess my human errors to myself.

The old umbrageous wood alive with birds,
The pathless cliff o'ergrown with moss and fir,
The tranquil sunny dale with flowers pied,—
They do not speak, and yet they tell so much.
The priest persuadeth me to be a slave;
A senseless wight religion bids me be;
Eternal Nature asks no sacrifice,
Imposes naught upon me, bids me naught.

When I despaired of our corrupted world,
I went to Nature to console myself.
Her blooming beauty in the prime of spring,
Her sweet mild sadness in the autumn-tide,
Her tranquil slumber in the winter-time,—
Have calmed my grief and pacified my mind,
Rebuoy'd my heart with energy and hope,
With youthful strength, and youthful love of life.

When all alone I stand upon a rock
And see the vast expansion of the sea;
When on the massing clouds mine eye is fixed
And mingles with the grand infinitude;
When through the ether my imagination floats
And views the planets rolling in their orbs,—
How mighty I am then, and yet how weak!
How little I am then, and yet how great!

When through the boughs the waving sunbeam
gleams,
And on the mountain-peaks a purple lies;
When through the valleys scented breezes blow,
And herb, and bud, and leaf, are lulled to sleep;
When in the sky the evening-star appears,
Bright as a messenger of peaceful times,—
How clearly I perceive the aim of life,
How full of love and peace my heart is, then!

I like to look at paintings old and rare,
To see how nature yields to human skill;
But more I like the old original,
The vivid hues of earth, and sea, and sky.
The greatest artist and the highest art
Can never thrill my heart with childish joy
As doth the cadence of a gliding brook,
The silken rustle of a stirring leaf.

I love the breeze as one doth love a child,
The breeze invisible and frolicsome;
And when it gambols with the flowery beds,
Plays with the bushes' twigs at hide-and-seek,
And curls the crystal streamlet in the wood,—
I long to be a little child again,
To gambol on the meadows with the breeze,
The breeze invisible and frolicsome.

Basil Dahl.

Socialism and the State.

My dear Mr. Tucker:

The first month of the year is a good one in which to settle old accounts, and I am sure "I owe you one" in reply to Mr. Yarros's criticism of my defence of voluntary Socialism. His article appeared some months ago, but I have been on the war path ever since, lecturing almost every night, and I did not see Mr. Yarros's article until recently, and since then have had scarcely a moment in which to write.

Perhaps it is just as well, however, for, on looking over my files of Liberty, I find that my poor little letter of less than one column has been honored with two long replies, containing nearly six columns, besides several smaller replies. I see, too, that you have asked your correspondents on both sides of the water to collect facts to answer my position. Verily, my little letter seems to have created quite a disturbance in your camp. This must be my excuse for writing a little more at length this time, but I am sure your generous paper will allow me some space after so much upon the other side and I know not how much more to come in answer to this letter. I will promise, however, not to write again, even if Mr. Yarros does once more, as he seems to have done this time, lay himself so invitingly open as almost to compel reply. The truth is that your Anarchist views appear to me so delightfully impractical that I cannot bring myself to spending much time in answering them. I feel like keeping all my powder for your altogether too practical allies, the trusts and monopolies. So, if you will let me have my say this time, I will promise not to do so any more.

Now for Mr. Yarros. I really feel immensely grateful to him. He admits that my plan is perfectly free—I quote his exact words—"rejecting every element of compulsion." Please ask your printer to print those words very distinctly, because I want to build upon them. They seem to me to give Mr. Yarros's position wholly away. Mr. Yarros's objections to my plan are two: first, that my plan, though free, is not "Socialism through the State," and, secondly, that it is not practical enough to be worthy of serious consideration. Very well. Let us consider these two points; only let us ever keep in mind that the plan, if it is Socialism through the State, and if it is practical, rejects "every element of compulsion."

First, then, is it Socialism through the State? Mr. Yarros says it is not, but then he seems a little doubtful of his own statement, for he adds a very important qualification, and says—I again quote his exact words—"the logical way to describe the plan would be to call it voluntary Socialism through the same body that, in another aspect and capacity, acts as a State." Please again ask your printer to print that admission very clearly. My plan, which is perfectly voluntary, does call for action through the same body that in another aspect and capacity acts as a State. This is surely getting pretty near to Socialism through the State. Why does Mr. Yarros, then, still deny that it is really "through the State"? Because he defines the State as "the embodiment of the invasive principle," and therefore, if the body that is called the State chooses to act non-invasively, it must be that it abolishes itself and becomes a voluntary association. What can be more clear? Nothing, absolutely nothing; only it means nothing. "I am Sir Oracle, and I define the State as the embodiment of the invasive principle. Even if the State should act non-invasively, no matter, it is not then the State. The State has thus abolished itself. Henceforth let no Socialist dog bark." *Voila* the whole of philosophical Anarchism. Does not every one see that the whole position depends on the definition of the State? If the State can never be free, certainly let us away with it, and all become Anarchists. "Resolved that the dog is a brute; come, let us kill the dog."

But not everybody consents to thus reason in a circle, and, after defining the State as the embodiment of invasion, laboriously succeed in proving, as you Anarchists certainly do, starting out with your definition, that the State is a bad thing. The whole question is: what is the State? Mr. Yarros says that I do not define it, and hence he does not know what I mean by its becoming voluntary, but that I probably use it as synonymous with social organization, and that I cannot deny that this is a sense peculiar to myself. Mr. Yarros is right. I did not define it. The reason why I did not was that I used it in the exact sense that all good writers use it. I will, however, now define it, because Mr. Yarros does not seem to know how good writers do use the word. If he can find his definition, "the embodiment of the invasive principle," in any single reputable writer outside of a little circle of philosophical Anarchists, I should like to know it. If there is any peculiar use of that word, then it is surely the use of it by philosophical Anarchists. Now let me give my definition. I turn to the first dictionary that is near me as I write—an old Webster. It defines the State as "a political body, or body politic. The whole body of people under one government, *whatever may be the form of the government*." I go to my books for other definitions. Bluntschli says: "The State is the politically-organized national person of a definite country." Speaking of the Universal State, he says: "The State is humanity organized." Woodrow Wilson, in his recent book, says: "Historically the State of to-day may be regarded as, in an important sense, only an enlargement of the family." Such are a few definitions. I accept any one of them. If Mr. Yarros still thinks I use words in a peculiar sense, he must have a peculiar definition of peculiarity. Perhaps he defines it as opposition to philosophical Anarchism, and then with infinite logic succeeds in proving that anybody who is not a philosophical Anarchist is peculiar; and, even if he should accept philosophical Anarchism, he would then be the same body that, in another aspect and capacity, is peculiar. Verily, definitions may be peculiar, and "logic is logic. That's all I say."

But, although outside of Anarchist circles I have never found a definition of the State such as theirs, I admit that many writers—all writers indeed—do consider the State necessarily to have sovereignty, which we may define as the right to use force. Now I admit this, but it by no manner of means follows that the State *always must use force.* Mr. Yarros is fond of talking of the sovereignty of the individual and of his right to use force, if he so choose. Does it follow that the individual always must use force, and that, if he does not, he should not be called an individual? Mr. Yarros, at present at least, does not believe in using force. What does he call himself? An individual, or a nonentity, or a sort of double-twisted body that in another aspect and capacity acts as an individual? Or would Mr. Yarros deny that individuals necessarily have sovereignty?

No, we admit that the State always must have the right to use force, but that it always must use that force is an absurd *non sequitur.* Yet it is one that logically follows from Mr. Yarros's definition. The absurdity lies in his definition.

So much for the use of words.

Mr. Yarros says he seems to detect in my former letter a tone of triumph. We think that perhaps he was right. Perhaps we saw how Mr. Yarros would tremble, and, as the old hymn puts it:

> We view our triumph from afar;
> By faith we wrought it nigh.

Now for Mr. Yarros's second objection. He says, and I agree with him, that my plan would not amount to enough to be called Socialism till applied at least to most of the industries of the country. Now, he says, to carry the plan as far as this through the body that in another aspect is called the State is so absurd as to make it impossible to treat it seriously. I do not quite know what Mr. Yarros means by "seriously." He does not define it; perhaps he uses it in some peculiar sense; but it would seem to people not Anarchists that he has treated the plan somewhat seriously. He writes six columns about it, and Mr. Tucker asks his correspondents to collect facts to overthrow my position. Possibly Mr. Yarros means that it is not possible to seriously *answer* my proposition, because, though he has written six columns, he has not answered my point. He has indeed collected a good many facts to show that the English cities I referred to were invasive. I agree with Mr. Yarros, and could give him still more facts for his list. I did not deny this. I distinctly said in my former letter that I did not use those cities as examples of complete Socialism. I simply said that *in a few things* they were expanding municipal activities without compulsory taxation to support the expense. Will Mr. Yarros deny that this is true? If he does, we will confront him with one of his own witnesses. He quotes the New York "Tribune" as saying that these cities have increased their tax rates. What of that? I did not deny that. The question is whether they have *always* raised their tax rates to meet these expanded activities. Now, this very passage in the "Tribune" which Mr. Yarros quotes says of these municipal ventures "most of these undertakings are already remunerative." If that be so,—and we are very grateful to Mr. Yarros for all the valuable points he gives us,—does it not follow that these undertakings help support the city and tend to lessen rather than raise taxation? Berlin gets millions of dollars annually from her municipal activities, and so can have far lower taxes than she would have otherwise. So with dozens of other cities. In this country the mayor of Marquette, Mich., once declared that, by owning an electric plant and selling its power, that city nearly met its expenses without any taxes whatever. Now I call Berlin, Marquette, and similar cities, neither Socialistic or free; but they do prove that compulsory taxation is by no means necessary for Socialism. This is all. In my original article I simply called for more voluntary Socialism of this kind. It will amount to

little, I well know, till it is carried a long ways, and this will not be done in a hurry; but abundant facts prove that *it can be done*. The State cannot, indeed, as Mr. Yarros well says, do it all at once; but little by little it can, till by and by we have the evolution of the State into complete liberty on lines which Mr. Yarros admits are perfectly free.

Nor is it at all necessary for the State to get capital enough to duplicate all the industries of the country. Let it, without any extra capital, issue bonds enough to buy at present cost of plant the old railroads or build new ones. Let those corporations that want to sell out do so; or, if they prefer, let them keep on. Let there be no compulsory taxation or prevention of competition. Railroads running for profit cannot compete with State roads run at cost. Wherever the experiment has been tried, the State roads have in the end survived. Then, when the State has established this industry, let it apply the same process to the mines, letting it offer to buy the mines and decline to protect those owners who do not care to sell. The owners might then organize private police companies after the Anarchistic plan. But Pinkertons without the State back of them could do little. People would soon be very glad to have peace and security in a free State. Then the State could take its earnings from the mines (and the same with all natural resources) to gradually absorb all industries. The key to the whole position lies in the fact that private industry cannot compete with industry organized in a large way on coöperative lines. Everywhere State activities are displacing private industries. If Mr. Yarros says it is a slow process, does he think that philosophical Anarchism is coming faster? If he does, let him read the lament of Mr. Spencer and other individualists over the rapid advance of Socialism. No; we discussed Mr. Yarros's use of terms at length, because, as he well says, it is not a mere verbal quibble. It involves a whole history of philosophy. Anarchists and Socialists alike aim at freedom. Mr. Yarros admits that my ideal rejects all compulsion. We both admit that the State to-day is in the main invasive. The only question is how quickest to bring in voluntary Socialism. Is it by working through the State, on the lines of historic evolution, or by destroying the State and hoping to establish coöperation on a basis of struggle each for number one? This seems to me the whole question, one of method *wholly*, but one which is of infinite importance and to which all experience seems to give but one answer,—that progress comes by evolution through existing institutions, and that the strife of individual sovereignty can lead only to the sovereign despotism of the shrewdest and smartest individual.

One word for yourself, Mr. Tucker. I presume it is your facile pen which characterized my plan as "A Socialist Paradise, Based upon Usury."

I really thank you very much. You and Mr. Yarros have both been extremely kind in your admissions. You are really too, too good. I have long suspected that you Anarchists believed the ideals of Socialists to be a Paradise, but I did not quite think you would admit it. Please let me thank you again. As for its being founded on usury, you are again quite right. Socialism has a solid basis in the present system, which is usurious, and it proposes to develop out of this, from usury, through less usury, to no usury. Your philosophical Anarchism is not based on usury. It is based on a peculiar definition, but, if it ever got near enough to earth to have any substantial basis, it would, we are sure, develop usury and the triumph of the smartest usurer. Wishing you speedy deliverance from your blindness, I am sincerely your friend, the enemy,

W. D. P. Bliss.

Argentine "Anarchism."

To the Editor of Liberty:

A little news from Argentina may be of interest.

Anarchist-Communism has been flourishing there for some few years, and is now represented by a round dozen of periodicals in Argentina and Uruguay, beside a fairly rapid succession of tracts and pamphlets. When I say "periodicals," I do not mean that they appear at stated periods; the usual announcement as to that is: "Appears when it can; price of subscription, every one according to his will." Still, they manage to come out with a tolerable approach to regularity, and one of them, "El Perseguido," has now reached Vol. 6, No. 96.

The quality of their Anarchist-Communism may be gathered from the following extract from "La Verdad," one of their most thoughtful organs, on the question what shall be done with drones in the future society:

> But if after some time anybody wished to live at the expense of the rest (we repeat that it is not credible that this should occur), then, without necessity of government, judges, police, or jails, we would say to them: "See, comrade, you, the same as all, have a right to satisfy all your needs; therefore try to occupy yourself in something useful, as we all do."
>
> Who will [not] prefer to divert himself a few hours in the work which suits him best sooner than wait till they have to give him notice?

If I understand this rightly, then, in case of obduracy on the part of the one who does nothing that his neighbors consider useful, some way will be found to make them work for a living,—in other words, either the Anarchism or the universality of the Communism breaks down in this extreme case. Our friends of the "Firebrand" are more consistent, and declare that they can better afford to feed the drones in idleness than to be bothered with coercing them.

Most of the Argentina propaganda, however (if it is fairly represented by the papers I receive), disdains such details, and confines its economic propositions to the broadest generalizations.

The *bourgeois* of Argentina have been imagining that their country was altogether free from the curse of Anarchism, till last fall they were suddenly waked up by a labor meeting in Buenos Ayres, where the cheers for Anarchy and the hisses for the Socialist politicians dominated everything. Since then there has been a good deal of police activity, and the public mind has been kept stirred up.

Now, in papers dated December and January (it takes an unconscionable time for mail to come from Argentina), comes news that the attorney-general has issued a proclamation declaring Anarchistic propaganda to be a crime, and apparently promising that it shall be repressed. The Anarchist papers reply by asking "when Anarchistic propaganda has not constituted a crime and been punished as such," and saying that they think well of their own patience for having stood the outrages of the police so long; but that now, as war appears to be formally declared, they will answer with bombs anything that is done to suppress their propaganda; and that, in so doing, they will be merely acting in self-defence.

As I have not heard telegraphic reports of any bombs in Argentina, I infer—as some of these papers said at the time—that the proclamation was simply buncombe.

Stephen T. Byington.

Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps.

The Secretary wants every reader of Liberty to send in his name for enrolment. Those who do so thereby pledge themselves to write, when possible, a letter every fortnight, on Anarchism or kindred subjects, to the "target" assigned in Liberty for that fortnight, and to notify the secretary promptly in case of any failure to write to a target (which it is hoped will not often occur), or in case of temporary or permanent withdrawal from the work of the Corps. All, whether members or not, are asked to lose no opportunity of informing the secretary of suitable targets. Address, Stephen T. Byington, Flushing Institute, Flushing, N. Y.

Why I believe in the Anarchist Letter-Writing Corps:

First reason—because this is the way to get most work out of the average man. It is a well-known fact of experience that almost anybody, by making a rule of setting apart a certain definite part of his income to be given to any cause in which he is interested, will give more generously (and at the same time feel it less) than if he gives without system whenever he feels so disposed. Just so almost anybody will do more and better work for a cause by setting himself a regular task to be done at regular times than by simply resolving that he will in general be helpful to the cause. Waiting for the spirit to move is an idea that has its attractive aspect, especially to the Anarchist, who likes to think of himself as a wild bird of the forest. But, if he is to make his way in the United States of America, he must learn to recognize himself as a business man too. In the struggle for existence the wild bird of the forest has no chance alongside the business man. The course of evolution gives the preference to those who, by method and industry, manage to get through the greatest amount of work.

Therefore, when we find a man with a certain amount of willingness to work for Anarchism, we want to coin that willingness into the greatest amount of solid work that so much willingness will produce. Now, by setting the average man to do a regular stint of work on regularly recurring occasions we get at least three times as much work from the same amount of willingness as if we had started the same man to working without system. (In my own case the number three is too low, I think.) And there is nothing accessible to the majority of Anarchists that will set us at work so regularly as the Letter-Writing Corps.

Moral: Join the Corps.

Target, both sections.—Very Rev. C. T. Brady, Manhattan, Kan., is reported in the Philadelphia "Evening Telegraph," March 16, as having on that date read before the Clerical Brotherhood (in Philadelphia) a remarkable paper on "Anarchy—A Problem of the Present Day." Following are extracts:

> Of late so many men of more or less eminence, including a few "ministers of the Gospel" whose reputation is such as to entitle their opinions to the respectful consideration, at least, of their fellow-men, have publicly proclaimed themselves Anarchists, and have affirmed with a positiveness which would seem to rest upon conviction that Jesus was an Anarchist also, that an inquiry into Anarchy, and the position of the Saviour of men with relation to it, may be in order.
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> Society and its developed instrument, government, is founded upon individual concession. . . . To found social organization a sanction is effected by the interested individuals, by which these superior beings voluntarily ratify and give validity to the acts of some determinate body which owes its existence to these concessions. The ratification is an empty and meaningless formula, unless to the so constituted regulating force, or government, in every society, is delegated, or surrendered, by the determining members, full authority upon the recalcitrant or the unwilling. These last we have always with us. Government is instituted "because the passions of men will not conform to the dictates of reason and justice without restraint." To establish these sanctions has been and is the work of ages.
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> No government has ever existed, nor can exist (except possibly for some limited period), without the consent of the governed. In the most iron despotism of history the yeomanry could not oppress nor abuse the peasantry, the gentry the yeomanry, the nobility the gentry, nor the monarch the nation, without the ultimate consent of the lowest classes of the people, carried up through all the intervening grades to the person of the sovereign. The question of the great French noble who, when asked by his ruler in a moment of petulance, "Who made thee count?" replied boldly and truthfully, "Who made thee king?" is the philosophy of government. Tyranny and oppression, like every other evil in this world, exist only on sufferance. . . .
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> The attempt to establish one or the other of two successive and dependent principles has been the cause of every revolution in history: the first one, now happily a dream of the past, abrogates the claim of the so-called divine right of kings to rule their fellows as subjects; the second, still, unfortunately, only a hope of the future, will determine the divine right of men to govern themselves. Neither of these principles, however, is opposed to the principle of government. The breaking down of the one fallacy and the building up of the other truth both demand concession.
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> The principle of concession introduces and depends upon the establishment of authority. Authority may be stated as domination, the right to command inseparably connected with ability to enforce. It makes no difference by whom authority is wielded temporarily; the fact of authority is always the same, and the court of appeal is always the constituting body. . . .
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> Who sanctions and upholds this principle of concession and authority? Almighty God. And who rejects it, and, with it, God? The Anarchist.
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> Anarchy may be defined as a state of existence without order or government. An Anarchist is one who refuses to recognize any authority in society or government; one who rejects entirely the principle of authority; one who refuses to allow himself to be bound by any convention into which humanity may have entered, looking to any concession of individual rights by him for any purpose or in any degree. An Anarchist is one whose hand is against his God and against every man, including his fellow-Anarchist, for with them he only affiliates as is his pleasure; to them he cannot be bound at all; his very profession of Anarchy renders it impossible for him to recognize any authority, even in those who think as he does; they are merely attracted for the moment, by the possession of a common and diabolic idea. And herein is the weak point in Anarchy; every Anarchistic movement carries in itself the seeds of its own destruction.

(I call this paper remarkable as a sign of the times, not for the remarkable quality of the ideas expressed.)

Note the inconsistency between the first paragraph and the last two as to whether believers in God can be, or ever are, Anarchists; the utter absence of proof for the statement that authority (as defined) is necessary to the working of the principle of concession, and the logical inconsistency of this statement with the sentence about divine right; the misleading definition of Anarchy as absence of order.

Section A will please write to the "Telegraph," remembering that letters to city dailies should almost invariably be short; section B to Archdeacon Brady, who probably cannot be won over, but may be induced to misrepresent us a little less.

STEPHEN T. BYINGTON.

From a Corps Target.

To the Editor of Liberty:

Your paper some weeks ago quoted several paragraphs from an article written by myself to the "South West." In consequence of your quotations, several letters have reached me, from subscribers of your paper, approving my sentiments, and urging my acceptance of *individual sovereignty* as logically deducible from claims of sovereignty for States.

Permit me, through your columns, to thank your subscribers for their interest in my opinions, and please assure them from myself that it is only because I am a firm believer in *individual sovereignty* that I have claimed, and do defend, the right of independence for States, and also for communities still smaller, whenever these find separate independence practicable and desirable.

J. L. TREUTHART.

PORTSMOUTH, O., MARCH 10, 1896.